



MEETING THE PROJECT MANAGEMENT CHALLENGE

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Biography

Michael J. Benik

Director – Independent Program Assessment Office NASA Headquarters

Mr. Benik is the Director of the NASA Independent Program Assessment Office (IPAO) in the Headquarters Office of the Chief Engineer. He is responsible for conducting independent program and project reviews across all NASA enterprises. These reviews typically include independent cost estimates for which the IPAO has the lead agency responsibility.

Prior to joining the IPAO in 2003, he served as Director of Expendable Launch Vehicle (ELV) Launch Services at the Kennedy Space Center since October 1999. There he was responsible for the management of the NASA engineering, integration, and safety and flight assurance for all NASA procured launch services. Mr. Benik managed this effort with a core group of civil service and contractor engineers at KSC and resident offices at Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif.; Boeing/Huntington Beach, Calif.; Pueblo, Colo.; Lockheed Martin/Denver, Colo.; and Orbital/Chandler, Ariz.

Mr. Benik began his career with NASA Glenn Research Center (formerly Lewis Research Center) in 1982 as a performance and trajectory analyst in the Space Transportation Engineering Division of the Shuttle/Centaur Program. He held increasingly responsible lead positions and was promoted to Chief of the Space Transportation Analysis Branch in 1991. In this position he was responsible for all performance analysis work for the successfully launched Mars Observer Mission, GOES weather satellites and the international Solar and Heliospheric Observatory.

In 1994, Mr. Benik was named Chief of the NASA Denver Resident Office and established a new NASA Resident Office at the Martin Marietta (now Lockheed Martin) facility in Denver. During four years in Denver he oversaw the launch vehicle production for the GOES, Terra, Cassini and TDRS missions.

When NASA's ELV program was consolidated at KSC in 1998, Mr. Benik moved to Florida to establish the Engineering Division in the new ELV Launch Services Directorate. He received NASA's Outstanding Leadership Medal for his ability to build this critical capability at KSC by attracting a highly capable team of engineers from Glenn Research Center, Goddard Space Flight Center, Marshall Space Flight Center, KSC and the private sector.

Mr. Benik graduated from Cleveland State University in 1979 with an M.S. in Physics and from the Florida Institute of Technology in 1977 with a B.S. in Physics. He served in the Peace Corps in Togo, West Africa, from 1980-82.



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